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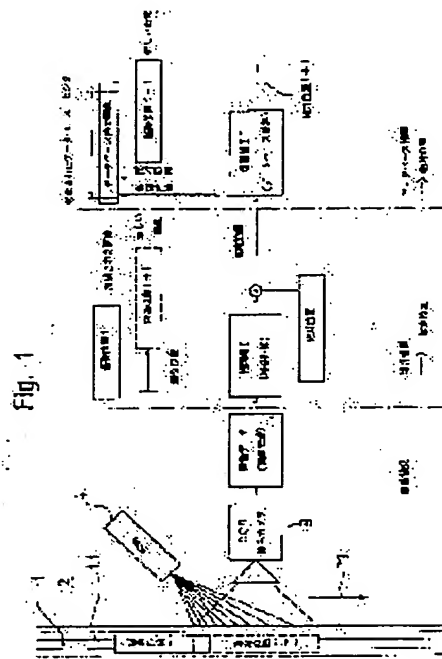
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(54) METHOD FOR GENERATING ELEVATOR SHAFT INFORMATION TO CONDUCT ELEVATOR CONTROL

(57)Abstract:

PROBLEM TO BE SOLVED: To provide a method for avoiding defects of known devices, and a system and a method for assuring generation of elevator shaft information usable for elevator control in any case.

SOLUTION: In the system for generating the elevator shaft information, an image of a surface of a guide rail 1 is recorded using a CCD linear camera 3, and an absolute position of an elevator cage is determined based on a surface pattern read from the image. Image data is inputted to a first correlation device I using an increment position of a new image and an absolute position i of a preceding image to generate an estimated position to be inputted to a second correlation device II. The estimated position is used for searching a related data base sector where an image stored in a data base is positioned at the time of calibration. The second correlation device II compares the new image with the stored image, and determines the absolute position $i+1$ to be transmitted to an elevator control means based on a position index of the stored image.



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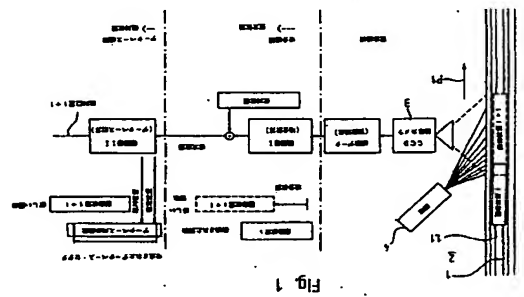
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(54) [発明の名称] エレベータ制御を行うための昇降路情報発生させる方法

(57) [要約]
【課題】 既知の装置の欠点を回避し、全ての場合にエレベータ制御に役立つ昇降路情報の生成を促進するシステムと方法を提案する解決法を提供する。
【解決手段】 昇降路情報を発生させる本システムでは、CCD撮像カメラ(3)を用いてガイドレール(1)の表面の画像が記録され、画像から読取り可能な表面パターンからエレベータケージの絶対位置が決定される。画像データは、新しい画像の絶対位置と先行する画像の絶対位置(i)とを使って第2の相関器(11)に人力される推定位置を生成する第1の相関器(1)に格納された画像を、校正時にデータベース内に格納するために使用される。第2相関器(11)は、新しい画像と格納された画像とを比較し、エレベータ制御手段に伝達される絶対位置(i+1)を、格納された画像の位置インデックスから決定する。



(2) 1

(10)特許請求の範囲
【請求項1】 エレベータ制御を行うために、図的に認識可能なパターンから生成される昇降路情報を、エレベータ昇降路内を走行可能なエレベータケージを備えるエレベータ昇降路から発生させる方法であって、昇降路情報からエレベータ昇降路内に存在するパターンから生成されるとき、他の機能を行う昇降路内の部品または装置の表面構造がパターンとして使用されることを特徴とする方法。
【請求項2】 1セクタずつ記録されたパターンから、画像が生成されるとき、先行画像に対する現在画像の相対位置と現在画像の絶対位置とが決定されることを特徴とする、請求項1に記載の方法。
【請求項3】 位置i+1の画像と位置iの画像とのオーバーラップから相対位置が決定されるとき、画像iの相対位置と絶対位置とから、画像データベースのセクタを捜し当てるために絶対位置が決定されるとき、捜し当てたデータベース画像と現在画像との比較から現在画像の絶対位置が決定されるときを特徴とする、請求項1または2に記載の方法。
【請求項4】 位置の決定が画像の階層画像の比較によって行われるとき、現在画像から前に知られた画像までの距離が位置を決定するための基準として役立つことを特徴とする、請求項3に記載の方法。
【請求項5】 位置を推定するために、信頼度の値が決定されるときを特徴とする、請求項3または4に記載の方法。
【請求項6】 エレベータ昇降路内の走行が行われて画像データベースが生成されるとき、記録されたパターンに位置インデックスが割り当てられ、画像データベースに格納されるときを特徴とする、請求項3から5に記載の方法。
【請求項7】 エレベータ昇降路内に配置されたガイドレールの表面構造またはエレベータ昇降路の壁がパターンとして使用されるときを特徴とする、請求項1から6のいずれか一項に記載の方法。
【請求項8】 CCD撮像カメラとメモリを有するプロセッサとを含む少なくとも一つのシステムがパターンを記録し、位置を決定することを特徴とする、請求項1から7のいずれか一項に記載の方法。
【発明の詳細な説明】
【0001】
【発明の属する技術分野】 本発明は、エレベータ制御を行うために、図的に認識可能なパターンから生成される昇降路情報を、エレベータ昇降路内を走行可能なエレベータケージを備えるエレベータ昇降路から発生させる方法に関する。
【0002】
【従来の技術】 エレベータ昇降路から昇降路情報を発生させるための装置は、特許明細書EP0722903B

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【発明の実施の形態】 図1は、本発明による昇降路情報発生させるための装置を示す。1は、ガイドレールを示す

1から明らかになっている。エレベータ昇降路内には、停止位置の近傍にコード付きの反射板が配置されている。このコードは、二つの同じトラックを持っている。ドア接点の機構が可能な停止位置の近傍ゾーンは、水障の上下半々に存在する。ロープの伸びによる低すぎるエレベータケージの調整が開放されたケージのドアによって可能になっている調整ゾーンは、水障の上下半々に存在する。トラックのコードは、エレベータケージ上に配置された2チャンネル分析装置によって読み取られて分析される。分析装置の送信器は、反射板のトラックを照明する。トラックの照明された表面は、分析装置のCCDセンサーに伝送されてパターン認識論理によって画像化される。画像のエレベータ制御を行うための情報への変換は、計算装置によって行われる。
【0003】 既知の装置の欠点は、パターンを発生させるために、エレベータ昇降路内に配置されたコードストリップを必要とすることである。コードストリップは、速度の伸びがなく正確にエレベータ昇降路内に配置しなくてはならない。更にコードストリップは、底盤をなす表面から完全に分離する必要があるという欠点がある。コードストリップの不適切な取り付けや脱落は、パターンを消滅させるという結果を招く。
【0004】

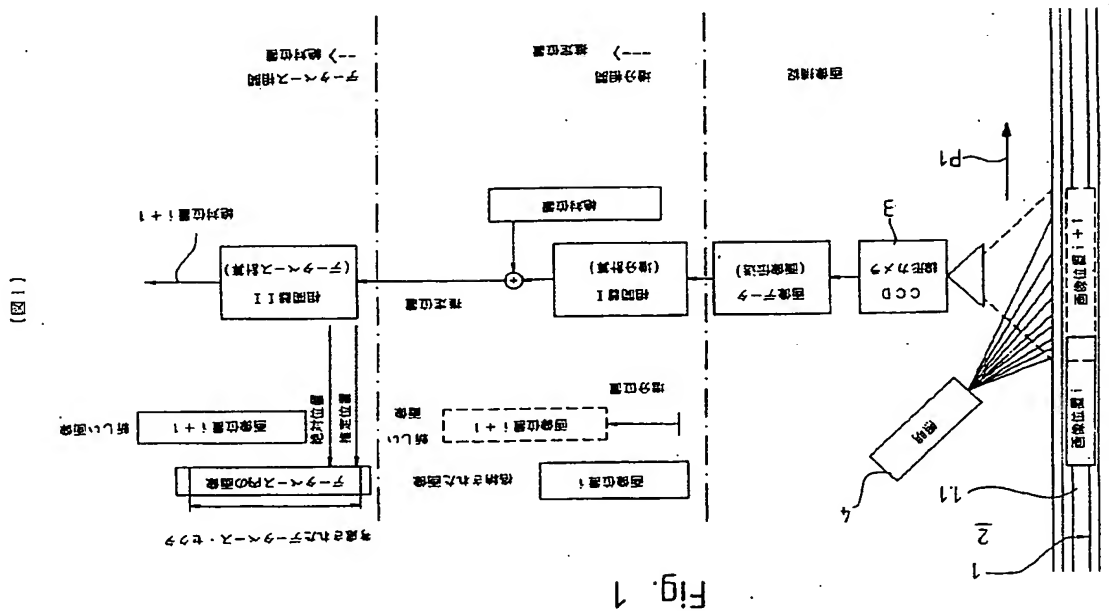
【発明が解決しようとする課題】 ここで本発明は、改善手段を示す。請求項1で特徴付けられたように本発明は、既知の装置の欠点を回避するための解決法、あらゆる場合にエレベータ制御に役立つ昇降路情報の生成を促進するシステムと方法を提案する解決法を提供する。

【課題を解決するための手段】 本発明によって達成される利点は主として、昇降路内に追加設備を必要としないことに見られる。それによってエレベータの設置時間は、十分に短縮することができる。センサーを装備してエレベータケージに配置される分析装置は、昇降路情報発生特性を有する安価な昇降路情報システムは、エレベータ昇降路内に存在する構造物によって実現可能である。この昇降路情報システムは既に、エレベータケージの走行を行わずに、運転開始時に絶対位置を与える。更に本システムは、フロアの停止位置を記憶することによって、また従来から例えばブレーキ操作、ドアゾーン、非常停止、その他に使用された昇降路スイッチをシミュレートすることができ、したがって本システムは、既存のエレベータ制御システムに適合可能である。
【0006】 本発明は、図1の図面を参照しながら詳細に説明される。
【0007】

【発明の実施の形態】 図1は、本発明による昇降路情報発生させるための装置を示す。1は、ガイドレールを示す

すが、これは、エレベータ群控路2内に配置され、昇降路脇望と見なされており、またガイドレール面1-1を持ってクエジを案内する働きをする。エレベータクエジの走行のその時々のは、矢印P1によって示される。CCエレベータクエジには、レンズ系とCCD撮影センサーとを有するCCD撮影カメラ3が配置されている。CCD撮影センサーは、エレベータの走行方向P1にU形配置されており、例えば128個のイメージ要素を持つて配置されており、例えば128個のイメージ要素を持っている。この配列では、例えば走行方向P1に沿って測定して、例えば2 cmの長さを有する、ガイドレール面1-1の2 cm区画と対応することができる。画像は、ガイドレールの表面構造または表面パターンを示す。CCD撮影センサーは、例えば高速で移動するエレベータクエジ上で、1000 Hzの画面周波数で動作することが可能である。イメージ要素に入射する光は電荷に変換される。電荷は、CCD撮影カメラ2で分析され、コンピュータに転送されるデータに変換される。

(4)



【 1 図】

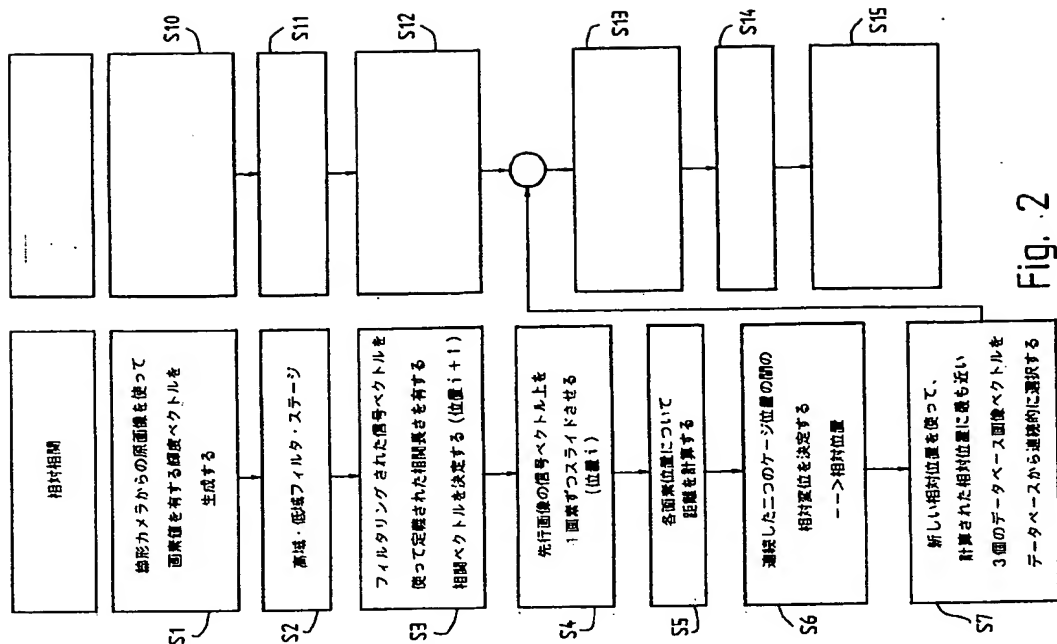


Fig. 2

【图2】

【図3】

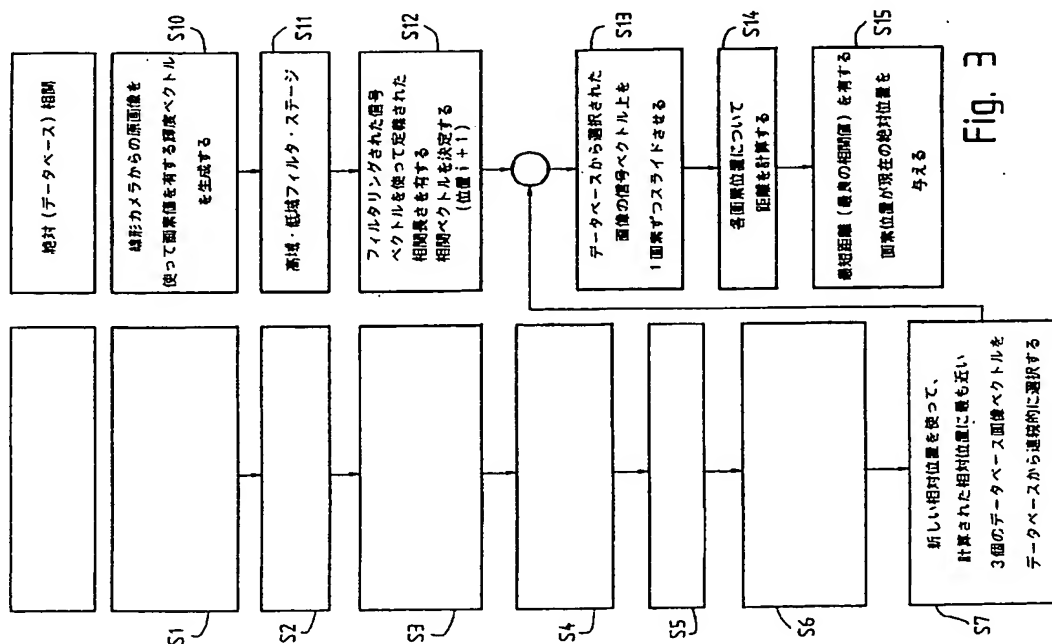


Fig. 3

フロントページの続き

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Fターム(参考) 3F303 C801 C807 FA01 FA02

【外題部開始】

1. Title of Invention

Method of Generating Hoistway Information to Serve an

Elevator Control

2. Claims

1. Method of generating, to serve an elevator control, hoistway information from an elevator hoistway with an elevator car which can travel in an elevator hoistway, the hoistway information being generated from pictorially recognizable patterns, characterized in that the hoistway information is generated from patterns present in the elevator hoistway, the surface structure of components or equipment in the hoistway which serve other functions being used as patterns.

2. Method according to Claim 1,

characterized in that

from the patterns which are recorded sector by sector images are generated, and a relative position of a current image to a preceding image, and an absolute position of the current image, are determined.

3. Method according to Claim 1 or 2,

characterized in that

from the overlap of an image of position $i+1$ with an image of position i a relative position is determined, and with the relative position and absolute position of the image i an estimated position is determined, which serves to locate a sector of an image database, and from a comparison of the located database image with the current image the absolute position of the current image is determined.

4. Method according to Claim 3,

characterized in that

determination of the position takes place by means of a comparison of the individual pixels of the image, the distance from the current pixel to a previously known pixel serving as criterion for determining the position.

5. Method according to Claim 3 or 4,

characterized in that

to check the positions a reliability value is determined.

6. Method according to Claims 3 to 5,

characterized in that

to generate the image database the elevator hoistway is traveled through and the patterns which are recorded are assigned a position index and stored in the image database.

7. Method according to one of the foregoing claims,

characterized in that

the surface structure of a guiderail arranged in the elevator hoistway, or the walls of the elevator hoistway, is used as a pattern.

8. Method according to one of the foregoing claims,

characterized in that

at least one system comprising a CCD line camera and a processor with memory records the patterns and determines the positions.

3. Detailed Description of Invention

The invention relates to a method of generating, to serve an elevator control, hoistway information from an elevator hoistway with an elevator car which can travel in an elevator hoistway, the hoistway information being generated from pictorially recognizable patterns.

From patent specification EP 0 722 903 B1 a device for generating hoistway information from an elevator hoistway has become known. In the elevator hoistway a reflector with a code is arranged in the vicinity of a stop. The code has two identical tracks. An approach zone of a stop, in which bridging of door contacts is allowed, lies half above and half below a leveling line. An adjusting zone, in which adjustment of an elevator car which is too low due to rope stretch is allowed with open car doors, lies half above and half below the leveling line. The code of the tracks is read and analyzed by a 2-channel analyzing device arranged on the elevator car. Transmitters of the analyzing device illuminate the tracks of a reflector. The illuminated surfaces of the tracks are captured on CCD sensors of the analyzing devices and imaged by means of a pattern recognition logic. Transformation of the images into information to serve the elevator control takes place by means of a computing device.

A disadvantage of the known device is that to generate patterns a code strip arranged in the elevator hoistway is necessary. The code strip must be arranged in the elevator hoistway precisely and without excessive stretching. Furthermore, it is not guaranteed that the code strip will not wholly or partly separate from the underlying surface. Incorrect mounting or detachment of the code strip results in no, or incorrect, patterns.

It is here that the invention sets out to provide a remedy. The invention, as characterized in Claim 1, provides a solution for avoiding the disadvantages of the known device and proposing a system and a method with which generation of hoistway information serving an elevator control is guaranteed in all cases.

The advantages achieved by means of the invention are mainly to be seen in that no additional installation is needed in the hoistway. The installation time for the elevator can thereby be substantially shortened. An analyzing device provided with sensors and arranged on the elevator car suffices to generate the hoistway information. A very reliably operating and inexpensive hoistway information system with high resolution can be realized with the structures present in the elevator hoistway. The hoistway information system already delivers an absolute position at startup without the elevator car traveling. Moreover, the system can store floor stopping positions and simulate the hoistway switches used hitherto for, for example, brake application, door zones, and

emergency stopping, or other hoistway switches. The system is therefore compatible with existing elevator controls.

The present invention is described in more detail by reference to the attached figures.

Fig. 1 shows the system according to the invention for generating hoistway information. 1 indicates a guiderail which is arranged in an elevator hoistway 2 and considered as hoistway equipment, and which has a guiderail face 1.1 and which serves to guide an elevator car able to travel in the elevator hoistway 2. The momentary direction of travel of the elevator car is indicated with an arrow P1. Arranged on the elevator car is a CCD line camera 3 with a lens system and a CCD line sensor. The CCD line sensor is arranged in the direction of travel P1 of the elevator car

and has, for example, 128 image elements. In this arrangement a section of, for example, the face 1.1 of the guiderail 1 with a length of, for example, 2 cm measured in the direction of travel P1, can be recorded. An image of the 2 cm section of the guiderail 1 is formed. The image shows the surface structure, or surface pattern, of the guiderail section. The CCD line sensor can, for example, on fast-moving elevator cars, be operated with an image frequency of 1000 Hz, the light falling on the image elements being converted into electric charges. The electric charges are analyzed in the CCD line camera 3 and converted into image data which is transferred to a computer.

Lighting 4 shines onto the guiderail section to be recorded, the light reflected from the guiderail section being converted into electric charges of the image elements of the CCD line sensor. To improve the image quality, flashed LEDs or halogen lamps can be used for the lighting 4.

The image quality can be further improved by digital filtering and/or by certain methods of image processing. Instead of the surface structure or surface pattern of the guiderail 1, it is possible for, for example, the surface structure or surface pattern of the wall of the elevator hoistway 2, or the surface structure or surface pattern of constructional parts (steel girders) of the elevator hoistway 2, to be recorded by the CCD line camera 3. Guiderails, walls, or constructional parts do not serve primarily to generate hoistway information but fulfill

their usual task of guiding and/or supporting the elevator car and/or counterweight or supporting parts of the building.

To calibrate the hoistway information system, the elevator hoistway 2 is traveled through. During this calibration travel, the surface structure or surface pattern recorded by the CCD line camera 3 is written in the memory of the computer together with a position index. To determine the stopping position for a floor, the elevator car is driven to the desired height, the position read by the system, and stored as reference value for the floor.

To increase safety, two redundant systems can be provided. One system records the surface structure or surface pattern of the one guiderail, the other system records the surface structure or surface pattern of the other guiderail. As a variant, both systems can record the surface structure or surface pattern of the same guiderail. The output signals of the one system can be used as training signal for the other system, and vice versa. If the surface structure or surface pattern of the one guiderail has changed since calibration, the new surface structure or the new surface pattern can be given the position data of the other system.

In Fig. 1 the image of the surface structure or surface pattern of the guiderail section of position 1 is represented by a continuous line, the image having already been recorded and the related absolute position determined. Fig. 1 shows the procedure for determining the

image of the surface structure or surface pattern of the guiderail section of position $i+1$. The new image with position $i+1$ is represented by a broken line and overlaps the image of position i . The image data are transferred to the computer with memory (not shown). A first correlator I of the computer, realized with software, calculates from the image of position i and the new image of position $i+1$ an incremental or relative position, and from this, by using the absolute position i , an estimated position. The estimated position of the image with position $i+1$ is transferred to a second correlator II of the computer, realized with software, which uses the estimated position to locate the relevant section of the database in which the image written during calibration lies. As explained above, the stored image is provided with a position index. The correlator II compares the new image of position $i+1$ with the stored image, and determines from the position index the absolute position $i+1$, which is transferred to the elevator control.

Changes in the surface structure or surface pattern of the guiderail 1 which have occurred during operation of the elevator can be continuously re-learned by the database. When changes occur on the surface of the guiderail, the new images of the guiderail 1 used for the incremental correlation are taken adaptively from the database.

As explained above, a CCD line camera 3 is provided with a lens system and a CCD line sensor. Instead of the line sensor, a two-dimensional surface sensor can also be provided. The image elements of the dimension

perpendicular to the direction of travel are averaged, which results in a one-dimensional brightness profile.

The speed v of the elevator car can be determined from the difference between position p_1 at instant t_1 and position p_2 at instant t_2 :

$$v = (p_2 - p_1) / (t_2 - t_1).$$

Instead of the CCD line camera 3, a dual-sensor system can also be used with two LEDs as light sources and two photoresistors as brightness detectors. When the elevator is traveling, the one signal is a time-delayed copy of the other signal. The two signals can be compared using correlation methods, and the speed of the elevator car can be determined from the time delay and the distance between the sensors. The position can be determined both by integration of the speed and by comparison with the data which was stored during calibration and subsequently continuously corrected.

In principle the correlation (correlator I or correlator II) compares a current image with a reference image. A correlation window is first extracted and then slid over the reference image pixel-by-pixel. For each pixel in the window, the difference in the pixel gray value is determined, and then the sum of their squares is calculated. This method of calculation determines the length of the difference vector between two image vectors which correspond to the one-dimensional images.

The pixel-by-pixel calculation of correlation values also makes it possible to derive a reliability value. At the corresponding point the correlation values are at a minimum, because two quasi-identical images have a distance approximating to zero. To calculate a reliability value ZW the absolute minimum aM , the second-best minimum zM , and the standard deviation S over the entire correlation length are used. In practical use, values of ZW between six and ten occur with a threshold of, for example, five being used:

$$ZW = (zM - aM) / S.$$

A very good reliability value occurs at lower speeds of the elevator car, the incremental correlation (two successive images with overlap) and the database correlation (complete image of the guiderail surface in the database) being good.

If the guiderail surface has undergone change, a good reliability value occurs at lower speeds of the elevator car, the incremental correlation (two successive images with overlap) being good, and the database correlation (incomplete representation of the guiderail surface in the database) being poor.

If the guiderail surface has not undergone change, a good reliability value occurs at higher speeds of the elevator car, the incremental correlation (two successive images with hardly usable overlap) being poor, and the database

correlation (complete representation of the guiderail surface in the database) being good.

If the guiderail surface has undergone change, a poor reliability value occurs at higher speeds of the elevator car, the incremental correlation (two successive images with hardly usable overlap) being poor, and the database correlation (incomplete representation of the guiderail surface in the database) being poor.

Fig. 2 shows the procedure for determining an incremental, or relative, position of a recorded section of, for example, the guiderail. The first correlator 1, realized in software, of the computer calculates from the image of position 1 and the new image of position $i+1$ an incremental, or relative, position. In a first step S1, a one-dimensional image with picture elements, or pixels, is extracted or generated from the image data of the CCD line camera 3. Following this, in step S2, the image, which is also referred to as an image vector or brightness vector, is then taken through a high-pass and low-pass filter stage. By processing the image vector or brightness vector with a high-pass filter, external disturbing influences regarding the illumination profile are suppressed. By processing the image vector or brightness vector with a low-pass filter, thermal noise of the CCD line camera is eliminated. In step 3, a correlation window or correlation vector with defined length is taken from the processed image vector or brightness vector of position $i+1$, the correlation window in step S4 being slid over the image vector of the preceding image i . In step S5, the distance

between pixel $i+1$ and pixel i is calculated for each pixel. After this, in step S6, the relative displacement between the image of position i and the image of position $i+1$ is determined. In Fig. 1 the relative position is designated as the incremental position. In step S7, the relative position is added to the preceding absolute position i . The new absolute position, which in Fig. 1 is designated as the absolute position, is the reference for locating the relevant section of the database. In step S7, three, for example, of the image vectors of the image database which are closest to the new absolute position are selected and input to the process shown in Fig. 3.

Fig. 3 shows the process for determining an absolute position of a recorded section of, for example, the guiderail. The second correlator II of the computer, realized with software, calculates from the image of position i and the new image of position $i+1$ an absolute position. In a tenth step S10, a one-dimensional image with picture elements, or pixels, is extracted or generated from the image data of the CCD line camera 3. Following this, in step S11, the image, which is also referred to as an image vector or brightness vector, is then taken through a high-pass and low-pass filter stage. By processing the image vector or brightness vector with a high-pass filter, external disturbing influences regarding the illumination profile are suppressed. By processing the image vector or brightness vector with a low-pass filter, thermal noise of the CCD line camera is eliminated. In step 12, a correlation window or correlation vector with defined length is taken from the processed image vector or

brightness vector of position $i+1$, the correlation window in step S13 being slid over the image vectors taken from the image database in step S7. In step S14, the distance between pixel $i+1$ and pixels taken from the image database is calculated for each pixel. Following this, in step S15, the pixel $i+1$ with the smallest distance is determined, and from this results the current actual position.

4. Brief Description of Drawings

Fig. 1:

a schematic representation of the system according to the invention.

Fig. 2:

the procedure for determining an incremental or relative position of a recorded section of a hoistway structure.

Fig 3:

the procedure for determining an absolute position of a recorded section.

Fig. 1

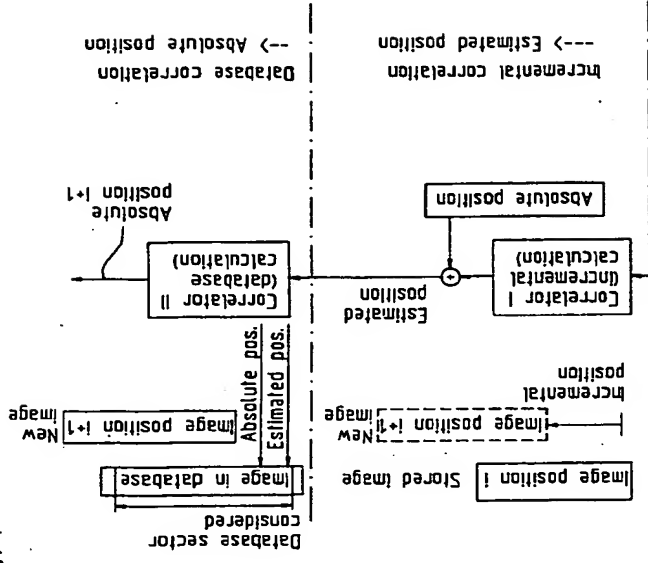
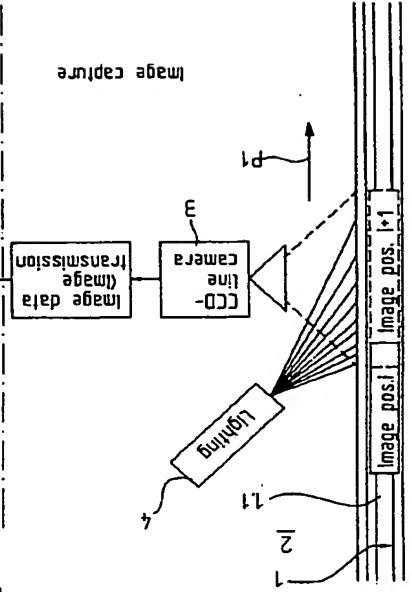


Fig. 1



1. Abstract

In this system for generating hoistway information, images of the surface of a guiderail (1) are recorded by means of a CCD line camera (3), and from the surface patterns which can be read from the images, the absolute position of the elevator car is determined. The image data are input into a first correlator (I) which uses an incremental position of a new image and an absolute position (i) of a preceding image to generate an estimated position which is input into a second correlator (II). The estimated position is used to locate the relevant database sector in which the image which was stored in the database during calibration is situated. The second correlator (II) compares the new image with the stored image and determines from the position index of the stored image the absolute position (i+1) which is transmitted to the elevator control.

2. Representative Drawing

Fig. 1

Fig. 2

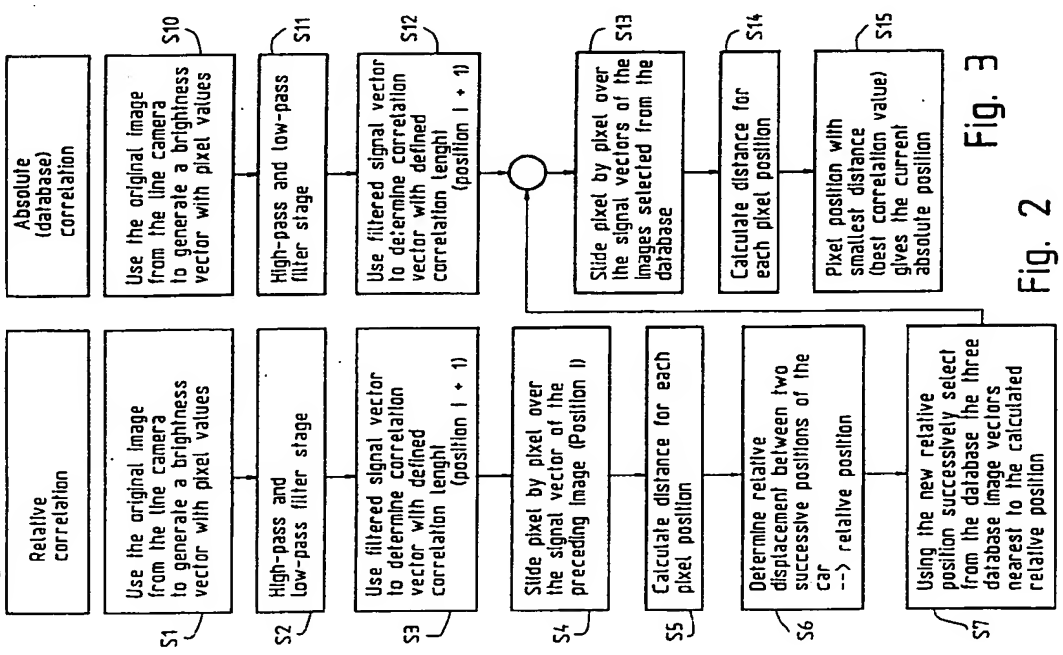


Fig. 2

Fig. 3

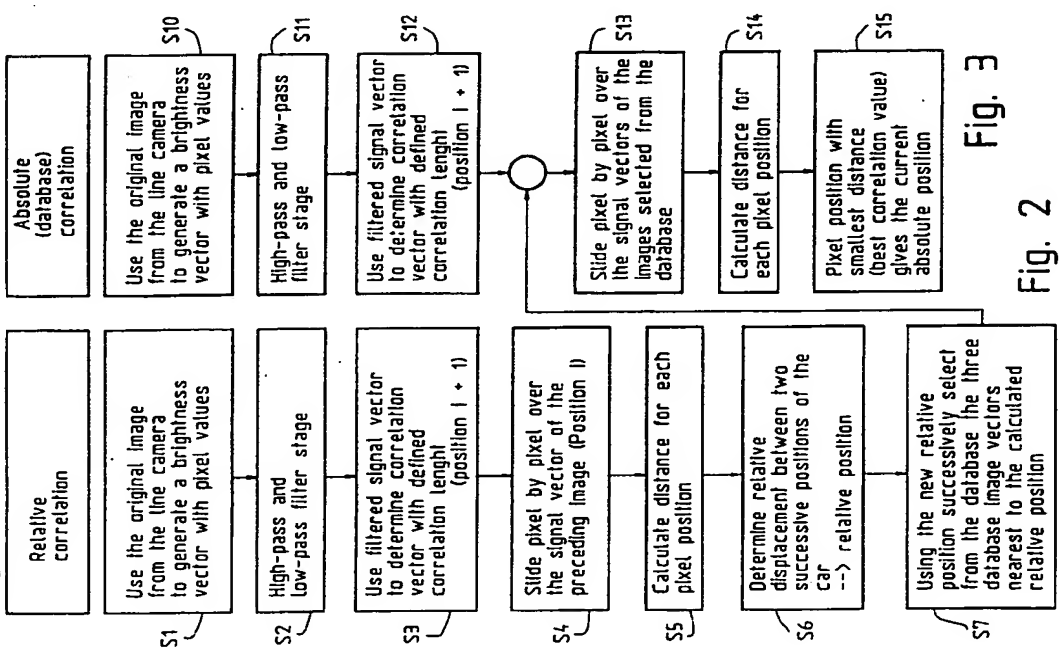


Fig. 3

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